

**IN THE CLAIMS:**

Please enter the attached listing of claims into the application. This listing of claims replaces all prior listing of claims in the application.

**LISTING OF CLAIMS**

1-48. (Cancelled)

49. (Currently Amended) A method for assessing the risk of colorectal cancer and colorectal polyps, comprising:  
selecting a panel of biomarkers comprising at least two polynucleotides including SEQ ID Nos:1 and 2;  
amplifying and quantifying RNA expression levels in a biological colorectal sample obtained from normal appearing mucosa from a subject for each biomarker in the panel including polynucleotides comprising SEQ ID Nos:1 and 2; ~~and~~  
comparing the quantified expression levels of each biomarker including polynucleotides comprising SEQ ID NO:1 and 2 in the sample to each of the same biomarker expression level in a normal control colorectal sample; and  
determining a difference in the expression levels in the biological sample compared to the normal control wherein an increase in the expression level of at least SEQ ID NO:1 and/or 2 is indicative of an increased risk of colorectal cancer and colorectal polyps.

50. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49, where the step of selecting a panel of biomarkers further comprises at least one polynucleotide having a sequence selected from the group consisting of SEQ ID NOs:3-15 and 16.

51. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49, where the step of selecting a panel of biomarkers further comprises at least one polynucleotide comprising a sequence selected from SEQ ID Nos: 15 and 16.

52. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 51, where the step of amplifying further comprises using at least two sets of primers chosen from (i) SEQ

ID NO:45 and 46, (ii) SEQ ID NO:47 and 48, (iii) SEQ ID NO:53 and 54, (iv) SEQ ID NO:73 and 74 and (v) SEQ ID NO:75 and 76.

53. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 52, where the step of amplifying further comprises using enzymes and reagents for the preparation of cDNAs.

54. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49, where the step of quantifying the levels of RNA further comprises labeling the amplified polynucleotide.

55. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 54, where labeling includes at least one chromophore.

56. (Cancelled).

57. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49, wherein an increase in a polynucleotide comprising SEQ ID NO:1 and/or 2 in the sample compared to levels of corresponding biomarkers from the normal control identifies the subject as a candidate for the risk management of colorectal cancer and colorectal polyps.

58-60. (Cancelled)

61. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 49, further comprising obtaining a sample of colorectal cells by minimally invasive or non-invasive techniques.

62. (Original) The method of claim 61, where the minimally invasive step is by use of a swab.

63. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 61, where obtaining a sample of colorectal cells is non-invasive.

64-95. (Cancelled)

96. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 57, wherein the biomarker comprises (i) SEQ ID NO:1, (ii) SEQ ID NO:2, or (iii) SEQ ID Nos:1 and 2.

97. (Cancelled).

98. (Currently Amended) A method for assessing the risk of colorectal cancer, comprising:

selecting a panel of biomarkers comprising polynucleotides having sequences including SEQ ID Nos:1 and 2;

obtaining a biological colorectal sample from normal appearing mucosa from a subject;

isolating cellular RNA from the sample;

amplifying and quantifying RNA expression levels in a biological colorectal sample from a subject for each biomarker in the panel including SEQ ID Nos:1 and 2; ~~and~~

comparing the quantified expression levels of each biomarker in the sample to each of the same biomarker expression level in a normal control colorectal sample; and

determining a difference in the expression levels of the biomarkers in the panel including SEQ ID Nos: 1 and 2 in the biological sample compared to the normal control, wherein an increase in at least SEQ ID NO:1 and/or 2 is indicative of an increased risk of colorectal cancer.

99. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98, where the step of selecting a panel of biomarkers further comprises at least one additional polynucleotide from SEQ ID NOs: 3-16.

100. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98, where the step of quantifying the levels of RNA further comprises labeling cDNA.

101. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 100, where labeling cDNA includes at least one chromophore.

102. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98, wherein an increase in the expression of a polynucleotide comprising SEQ ID NO:1 and/or 2 in the sample compared to levels of corresponding biomarkers from the normal control identifies the subject as a candidate for further clinical management.

103. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 98, where the step of obtaining a sample of colorectal cells is minimally invasive or non-invasive.

104. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 103, where the minimally invasive step is by use of a swab.

105. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 102, where the step of obtaining a sample of colorectal cells is non-invasive.

106-107. (Cancelled)